

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00200 141158Z

44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 /023 W

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R 141131Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO USDA FAS WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5843

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TOFAS 03

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, SY

SUBJECT: U.S. SEED TEAM VISIT

REF: STATE 3575

1. SYRIAN MARKET POTENTIAL FOR US SEED, PARTICULARLY FIELD SEEDS, APPEARS VERY ATTRACTIVE JUDGING FROM RECENT GOVERNMENT REQUESTS FOR OFFERS. AMBITIOUS FORAGE PROGRAM NE SYRIA REQUIRES LARGE QUANTITIES IMPORTED SEED. 1976 REQUIREMENTS BELIEVED ALREADY MET, INCLUDED REQUESTS FOR 9,000 TONS WOOLYPOD VETCH, 4,000 TONS COMMON VETCH, 150 TONS CLOVER AND 40 TONS ALFALFA SEED. GOV'T REQUEST FOR OFFERS FOR 1976 ALSO

INCLUDED 400 TONS HYBRED CORN, 157 TONS SUNFLOWER AND 170 TONS SOYBEAN SEED. SYRIA GENERALLY IMPORTS SUGARBEET SEED, WITH 1975/76 REQUIREMENTS ESTIMATED AT 200 TONS. HORTICULTURAL SEED GENERALLY IMPORTED BY PRIVATE TRADE TOTALLED ESTIMATED 229 TONS IN 1974 VALUED AT 800,000. U.S. SHARE OF VOLUME 18 PERCENT. US MELON SEED VERY POPULAR. SYRIA IMPORTS RICE, PULSE AND SORGHUM SEED BUT NO WHEAT OR BARLEY SEED.

2. AGATT APPROVES PROPOSED VISIT.

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3. AGATT RECOMMENDS TEAM PLAN ONE WORKING DAY

IN DAMASCUS TO MEET PRIVATE TRADE AND MINAG, AND
ONE OR TWO DAYS ALEPPO TO VISIT NEWLY CREATED GOV'T
SEED MULTIPLICATION AGENCY, SEED FIRMS AND DURING
SECOND DAY VISIT TO EUPHRATES VALLEY WHERE LARGE
IRRIGATION PROJECTS UNDERWAY. AGATT ALSO RECOMMENDS
SEEDSMEN FAMILIAR WITH DESER AND IRRIGATED
AGRICULTURE BE INCLUDED ON TEAM. DAMASCUS/ALEPPO
TAKES FIVE HOURS BY CAR. THUS, MINIMUM FOUR DAYS
PREFERABLY FIVE NEEDED FOR VISIT EXCLUDING FRIDAY
WHICH COULD BE USED FOR DRIVE TO OR FROM ALEPPO.
FIELD CONDITIONS BETTER IN MARCH.
MURPHY

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